

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3, 5, and 6 are pending.

Claims 1-3 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamaoka (Japanese Patent Publication JP 11-028856) in view of Aoki et al. (Japanese Patent Publication JP 02001-239779 A) and in further view of Williams et al. (US Pre-Grant Publication 2004/0227267).

An aspect of the claimed invention is that ink receiving layers are formed directly on a base material sheet. Surfaces of the ink receiving layers that are in contact with the base material sheet are protected by it during processing to be subsequently printed on, when the base material sheet is peeled or separated from the ink receiving layers. Claim 1 has been amended to recite in pertinent part:

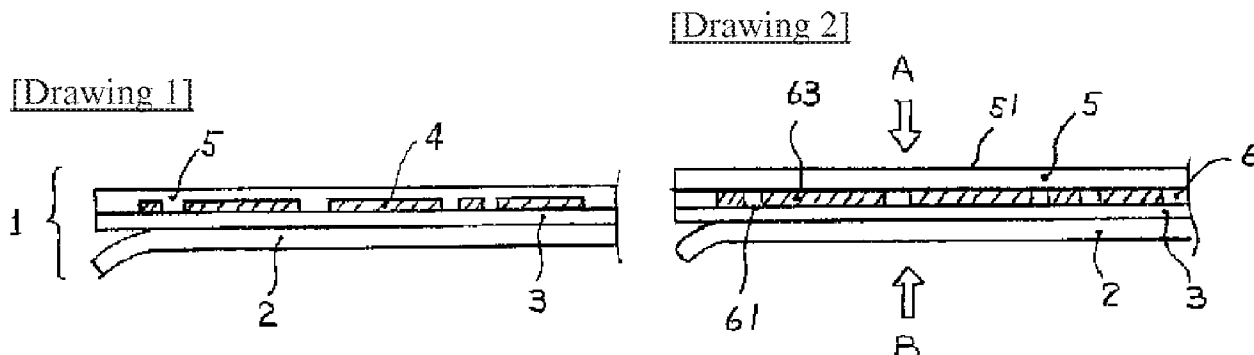
...
a step of molding a card base by injecting said injection-molding resin into said cavity in a state where said transfer sheet is disposed in said cavity, and at the same time joining said plurality of ink receiving layers to said card base wherein printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers are in contact with and covered by said base material sheet, thereby protecting said printing surfaces;

...
a step of exposing said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers by peeling said base material sheet from said plurality of ink receiving layers and said card base so that said plurality of ink receiving layers remain on said card base; and
a step of printing to said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers after said card base is taken out from said cavity. (underlining added to emphasize).

The process shown in Figs. 1-3 illustrate an example of the printing surface ink layers (surface of 2) covered by base material sheet (4a), exposing the printing surface by peeling base sheet (4a) from ink layers (2) and card base (1), Fig. 1(d), and printing (Figs. 2 and 3). No new matter has been added.

The Office action cited JP 11-028856, and in particular drawings 1 and 2. The examiner alleged the following correspondence between certain claim elements and JP 11-028856. The drawings are provided below for convenience.

<u>claimed</u>	<u>alleged in the Office action, Drawings 1 and 2 (JP 11-028856)</u>
transfer sheet	element 1 – transfer layer
base sheet	element 3 – peeling layer
ink layer	element 6 – ink layer



Element 2 is a substrate sheet. Element 5 is an adhesive layer to which the ink absorbing layer is attached. A description of these elements is provided in the explanation in paragraph [0015].

JP 11-028856 explains, and the figures clearly illustrate, that substrate sheet 2 is separated from peeling layer 3. Significantly, peeling layer 3 remains connected to ink layer 6.

By contrast, claim 1 explicitly recites “exposing said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers by peeling said base material sheet from said plurality of ink receiving layers and said card base.” Drawings 1 and 2 (and in general, JP 11-028856) do not show a step of exposing a printing surface of ink layer 6. Drawings 1 and 2 (and in general, JP 11-028856) do not show that peeling layer 3 (alleged to be the “base material sheet”) is peeled from the ink layer 6.

Claim 1 further recites “printing to said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers after said card base is taken out from said cavity.” JP 11-028856 cannot be fairly construed to teach or even suggest “printing to said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers” because the reference does not appear to teach that any surface of ink layer 6 is exposed for printing. For example, ink layer 6 is adhered to adhesive layer 5, therefore the surfaces of ink layer 6 that are in contact with adhesive layer 5 are not exposed for printing. Since peeling layer 3 is not separated from the ink layer 6 (rather peeling layer 3 is peeled away from substrate sheet 2, as can illustrated in the figures), the surfaces of ink layer 6 that are in contact with peeling layer 3 are also not exposed for printing.

The supporting references to Aoki and Williams fail to remedy the claimed limitation missing in JP 11-028856. Accordingly, the art of record does not render obvious:

A method for manufacturing a card comprising:
a step of forming a transfer sheet by directly forming a plurality of ink receiving layers arranged in a form of a two dimensional matrix with a predetermined spacing on a base material sheet;
a step of inserting a transfer sheet into a cavity of a metal mold in a state where a surface of said plurality of ink receiving layers face a room of said metal mold into which an injection-molding resin is injected;
a step of molding a card base by injecting said injection-molding resin into said cavity in a state where said transfer sheet is disposed in said cavity, and at the same time joining said plurality of ink receiving layers to said card base wherein printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers are in contact with and covered by said base material sheet, thereby protecting said printing surfaces;
a step of taking out said card base joined by said plurality of ink receiving layers from said cavity;
a step of exposing said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers by peeling said base material sheet from said plurality of ink receiving layers and said card base so that said plurality of ink receiving layers remain on said card base; and
a step of printing to said printing surfaces of said plurality of ink receiving layers after said card base is taken out from said cavity.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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